

(39) M-695

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

762.00/2-1159

DATE: February 11, 1959

SUBJECT: Germany

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*Hervé Alphand
Ministre de la Défense*

PARTICIPANTS: M. Herve Alphand, French Ambassador
M. Charles Lucet, French Minister
M. Jean Jurgenson, French Foreign Office
Mr. Robert Murphy, Deputy Under Secretary
Mr. Robert H. McBride, WE
Mr. Dean Brown, WE

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The Ambassador said that there had been a large measure of agreement between the Secretary and General de Gaulle. Since their talk, a new element had been introduced, namely possible resort to the U.N.

Mr. Murphy said that this idea was new. What the Secretary has in mind is not so much the substance of what would come from a Security Council discussion but rather the time and opportunity it would give world opinion to focus on the issues involved.

The Ambassador said that he did not oppose the idea but thought it presented problems. There would probably be a veto in the Council and considerable trouble in getting a two-thirds vote in the Assembly. Additionally, it might be difficult to prevent the Assembly discussing the whole range of German problems. The Ambassador said that he had some other points to make. First, France agrees with the idea of willingness to show identification to GDR forces but not to accept a stamp. He expressed some doubts as to the position of the U.K. on this point. Secondly, France does not exclude a ground force action; but it does not exclude either a small air lift.

Mr. Murphy said that we do not exclude the second either but what we have been talking about is the desirability of creating a psychological impression that we do not exclude a land action. This is important in order to make the Soviets appreciate our position.

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The Ambassador

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The Ambassador mentioned paragraph D of the contingency plans and asked if these would be discussed in Washington.

Mr. Murphy said that he expected to get in touch with the French soon on this point.

Ambassador Alphand asked if the United States had accepted the three-point text he had proposed.

Mr. Murphy replied negatively, noting that it required study by both State and Defense.

Thereupon followed a general discussion of the labors of the quadripartite working group.

The Ambassador then expressed his concern at the plethora of speculation and rumor in the press. He said it would give the Soviets the impression that we are melting. However, he believed that the American Administration had not changed.

Mr. Murphy said that this last statement was completely correct. The Secretary had given General de Gaulle all of U.S. thinking. There has been no change.

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